

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Lutron

Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension Inc

The Coral Line Transformation

Client Profile:

Lutron SM, located in Humacao, Puerto Rico, assembles and manufactures light dimmers. Its headquarters, Lutron Inc., is located in Pennsylvania. The company has been in operation for approximately 26 years and currently employs 350 people.

Situation:

Lutron's market demand required the expansion of their operations and were looking for additional space to bring new products to Puerto Rico; therefore, the company wanted to improve its dimmers assembly operations. Such assembly operations use conveyors and some of these were not able to complete their production schedules without the use of "overtime." In addition, the company had moved some products off one of their lines, and it was running only 50 percent of the time. Lutron contacted the Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension Inc., (PRiMEX), a NIST MEP network affiliate, to assist with the situation.

Solution:

PRiMEX recommended the implementation of manufacturing cells to replace the existent conveyor assembly line. The company chose the "Coral" line to perform the transformation. Cell Manufacturing training and assistance were provided to the employees involved in the operations, and a three-day Kaizen event was performed.

Results:

- * Implemented cell manufacturing training and assistance.
- * Output equals demand.
- * Improved line efficiency by 9 percent first three weeks.
- * Reduced shop floor space by 28 percent.
- * Reduced Work In Progress by 71 percent.
- * Takt time freed up 5 people for other value-added operations.

Testimonial:

"We did this as a pilot project to convince ourselves that this is the direction we want to steer our plant. After this experience, we believe in the methodology and are planning to spread it across the plant."

Tim Goetz, Plant Manager